

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 021650Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6311

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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LONDON POUCH TO BELFAST

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, EI, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: SHORT EXTENSION OF IRA TRUCE

1. RADIO AFTERNOON JANUARY 2 REPORTS THAT PROVISIONAL IRA HAS EXTENDED ITS NI CHRISTMAS TRUCE FOR TWO WEEKS. TRUCE HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO END AT MIGNIGHT JANUARY 2. EXTENSION WAS CONFIDENTLY EXPECTED (DUBLIN 0002), BUT FOR A PERIOD OF AT LEAST ONE MONTH.

2. JOURNALISTS AND POLITICAL CONTACTS BELIEVE THERE IS SOME DISCORD IN PROVO "ARMY COUNCIL," WITH HARD-LINERS FAVORING IMMEDIATE END TO TRUCE AND OTHERS SEEING POSITIVE ADVANTAGES IN LONG CEASE-FIRE. BELFAST PROVOS ARE BELIEVED TO BE TAKING A TOUGHER LINE THAN THOSE FROM REPUBLIC, ALTHOUGH NONE WOULD QUALIFY AS DOVES. "IRISH PRESS," WHICH HAS ALWAYS HAD GOOD IRA CONTACTS, REPORTS THAT SEAMUS TWOMEY OF BELFAST HAS TAKEN OVER COMMAND OF IRA, WITH KEVIN MALLON "ACTING AS HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN." SAME ARTICLE SAYS THAT DAITHI O CONAILL (WHO HAS BEEN PRESUMED IRA CHIEF-OF-STAFF) HAS NOW BEEN REASSIGNED TO "WORKING OUT POLITICAL STRATEGIES." THIS REPORT IS UNCONFIRMED BUT GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH STORES OF BELFAST-DUBLIN SPLIT WITHIN PROVOS.

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3. COMMENT: AS SEEN FROM DUBLIN EXTENSION OF TRUCE FOR ONLY TWO WEEKS IS NOT A PARTICULARLY GOOD SIGN. NI SECRETARY MERLYN REES MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO PHASE INTERNMENT DOWN SUBSTANTIALLY AGAINST SUCH A TIGHT DEADLINE, AS HE WOULD BE ACCUSED BY PROTESTANTS OF CAVING UNDER PROVO THREAT. IF PROVOS WERE TO SUSPEND VIOLENCE FOR A LENGTHY PERIOD, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE REES WOULD WIND DOWN INTERNMENT. THIS IN TURN WOULD GIVE PROVOS AN EXCUSE TO CONTINUE THEIR CEASE-FIRE. THE TWO-WEEK DEADLINE HAS COMPLICATED PROSPECTS FOR THIS STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH.

4. PROVOS WOULD, PRESUMABLY, ALSO BE HAPPY WITH THE LONG-SOUGHT BRITISH "DECLARATION OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW." THIS, HOWEVER, IS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THAN ENDING INTERNMENT. IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE ANY "DECLARATION" THAT WOULD SATISFY PROVOS WITHOUT CAUSING MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM ON PROTESTANT SIDE.

5. SEVERAL CLERGYMEN AND OTHER MEDIATORS ARE STILL TRYING TO FIND A FORMULA FOR INDEFINITE EXTENSION OF CEASE-FIRE. EVERYONE HERE WOULD LIKE TO THINK THEY HAVE CHANCE FOR SUCCESS, BUT THOSE WHO ARE BEST INFORMED ARE CAUTIOUS IN THEIR EXPECTATIONS.
MOORE

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